

Epoetin alfa

eh-POH-ee-tin

Brand Name: Epogen, Procrit



Epoetin is a man-made version of human erythropoietin (EPO). EPO is produced naturally in the body, mostly by the kidneys. It stimulates the bone marrow to produce red blood cells. If the body does not produce enough EPO, severe anemia can occur. This often occurs in people whose kidneys are not working properly. Epoetin is used to treat severe anemia in these people. Epoetin may also be used to prevent or treat anemia caused by cancer, surgery, or certain medications.

HIV/AIDS-Related Uses

HIV infected people who take zidovudine (AZT, Retrovir) sometimes become anemic. Epoetin alfa is used to treat anemia that is related to zidovudine treatment.

Dosage Information

Epoetin alfa is given by injection under the skin or into a vein.

Contraindications

Individuals who have bone problems; blood problems, including a history of blood clots; a deficiency of folic acid, iron, or vitamin B12; heart or blood vessel disease; high blood pressure; history of seizures; or sickle cell anemia should tell a doctor before receiving this medicine.

Possible Side Effects

Along with its desired effects, epoetin alfa may cause some serious unwanted effects. A doctor should be notified right away of side effects that include chest pain or trouble breathing. A doctor should also be notified of any of the following: fast heartbeat; headache; high blood pressure; swelling of face, fingers, lower legs, ankles, or feet; vision problems; and weight gain.

Other side effects usually are not serious and may lessen or disappear with continued use of the medicine. Less serious side effects of this medicine include bone pain, congestion in the lungs, cough, diarrhea, fever, headache, itching or stinging where injection was given, loss of energy, nausea or vomiting, muscle weakness, skin rash or hives, tiredness, and weakness. A doctor should be notified if these side effects continue or are bothersome.

Drug and Food Interactions

A doctor should be notified of any other medications being taken, including prescription, nonprescription (over-the-counter), and herbal medications.

Clinical Trials

For information on clinical trials that involve Epoetin alfa, visit the ClinicalTrials.gov web site at <http://www.clinicaltrials.gov>. In the Search box, enter: Epoetin alfa AND HIV Infections.

Manufacturer Information

Epoetin alfa
Ortho Biotech
P.O. Box 6914
430 Rt. 22 East
Bridgewater, NJ 08807-0914
(800) 682-6532

Epogen
Amgen Inc
1840 Dehavilland Dr
Thousand Oaks, CA 91320-1799
(800) 772-6436

Procrit
Ortho Biotech
P.O. Box 6914
430 Rt. 22 East
Bridgewater, NJ 08807-0914
(800) 682-6532

For More Information

Contact your doctor or an AIDSinfo Health Information Specialist:

• Via Phone: 1-800-448-0440 Monday - Friday,

Epoetin alfa



For More Information (cont.)

12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 5:00 p.m. ET

- Via Live Help: http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/live_help
Monday - Friday, 12:00 p.m. (Noon) - 4:00 p.m. ET